

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHARACTER BY ORDINARY SCHOOL EXERCISES.

REPORT OF AN ADDRESS BY R. K. ROW, KINGSTON.

Comenius has said :—"The end of all education is the development of character." Many teachers take exception to this proposition, but see no objection in the more commonly stated one :—"Education is the harmonious development of the whole man, physical, intellectual and moral." This latter expression of a great truth is taught in every book on the principles of education, in every training school for teachers, in every educational paper, at every teachers' meeting, until all teachers assent to it, and few believe it. For mark you, these two propositions are identical. Character is what a man is, character is the whole man ; hence when you assent to the common definition, "Education is the development of the whole man," you virtually assent to that state by Comenius, "The end of all education is the development of character." You assent to it, but do you believe it? I should like to feel that the members of this body, representing the foremost teachers in the Province, do believe, (by live—live by), this great principle. I should like to feel that you keep constantly before your minds day by day that the end, the one great purpose, of *all* your work in school is the development of the character of your pupils. If you have that single purpose you ought to love one another very dearly ; it ought to be a very strong bond of union ; for you are probably about the only ones in Ontario. You ought to form a society for the dissemination of your doctrine. Listen :—If you really have that conception of your work, you have the noblest calling entrusted to a human being. No minister of the Gospel has such opportunities for doing good as a teacher with this high, consecrated ideal of his work.

It has often occurred to me that with many teachers the end of all education is the passing of examinations. In our public schools, the end, the one purpose, kept constantly in view by teachers and diligent pupils, is the promotion examinations from grade to grade ; in the fourth class, the end is the High School entrance examination ; in the High School, the end is the examination for teachers certificates or university matriculation ; in the college with some professors and not a few students, the end is graduation. Now do not suppose I quarrel with examinations, they are necessary ; but unless they can be made to measure power developed, they should not be the end of our work.